

Facilitated Group Discussion Plan

Title: Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

Topic: Women's Health

Subtopic: Domestic Violence

Target Group: Parents, WIC clients

Objective For The Session: Participants will identify what domestic violence and child abuse is, the effect abuse has on them and their children, the laws and one's rights, safety plans and how to get help.

Icebreaker: The teacher will describe a personal incident that has happened to her or someone she knows that either involves domestic violence or child abuse. All examples will be totally confidential.

Counseling Points/ Discussion Questions: Each of the following questions will be discussed as a group:

- What is abuse? What are the characteristics of abusers?
- How does abuse affect you and your children?
- What are your rights? What are the laws on reporting abuse in Utah?
- How can you get help? What is a safety plan?

Factual Messages:

- There are many types of abuse such as: verbal, physical, sexual, emotional, neglect and mental.
- Characteristics of an abuser: a push for quick involvement, constantly putting you down by saying hurtful things, has you wondering what is wrong with me?, controlling behavior (where have you been, who was on the phone?), unrealistic expectations, blames others for his/her problems or mistakes, is frequently angry or irritable (yet claims nothing is wrong), sudden mood swings in a matter of minutes, isolates you from your family and friends, has threatened violence or has ruined your property, and playful use of force during sex and or makes you do things you do not like.

- Effects of abuse: you or your children could get injured during an incident, they may be traumatized by fear for their mother or their own helplessness to protect her, and they may blame themselves for not preventing the violence. They may be abused or neglected themselves. Children could have delayed motor or speech skills, have frequent nightmares, loss of respect for either parent, have an increased risk of running away, become dependent on drugs and alcohol, have an increased risk of committing suicide, have an increased risk of becoming a parent and marrying too early. There is an increased risk that they will grow up to be abusers themselves. Abuse can also affect the nutritional intakes of moms or the children. It can affect the baby if the pregnant mom is physically abused. It is also abuse if food is withheld from moms or children.
- There are tough new laws that are there to protect you and your children. Domestic violence should not happen to anybody. Ever. Period. Call the police if you or anyone you know is experiencing abuse.
- How to get help: call the police, call for support from friends and family, find a safe place, get medical help, get a personal protection order, and make a safety plan. Contact DHS Domestic Violence Program, The Dove Center, Victim Advocate Program, Children's Justice Center, Washington County Victim Assistance Team. All are listed on handouts.

Summarize key discussion points/suggestions: Ask participants what they have learned from the discussion. This topic may be hard for some clients to discuss because it can be very personal, but hopefully any mom who is having problems with domestic violence will seek help after coming to this class.

Materials Needed: Handouts for the Dove Center, Victim Services, Children's Justice Center, Women's Domestic Violence Support Group, Children's Education Group, Department of Child and Family Services Domestic Violence Program, Cycle of Violence, Impact On Children, Domestic Violence Creates Crime, A Child's Safety Plan, Safety Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Being Hurt By What Is Not There, and Dating Violence.

References: Oakland County Coordinating Council Against Domestic Violence, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, USDA Safety, Health and Employees Welfare Division Domestic Violence Awareness Handbook.

Lesson Assessment

Please complete and Return to the WIC Nutritionist

1. Was this lesson easy to understand?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Was this lesson helpful to you?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Would you change anything about this lesson?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. What additional information do you need?
